

Message Text

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R 242333Z AUG 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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STADIS/////////
EXDIS

E.O11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS INDONESIA

REF: JAKARTA 10932

1. FRASER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON DID PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY
TO OBTAIN IMPRESSION OF AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD INDO-
NESIA. ALSO, SUBJECT WAS FULLY DISCUSSED IN AUGUST 3-4
ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING.

2. AUSTRALIANS HAVE LEFT NO DOUBT IN OUR MINDS THAT THEY
CONSIDER INDONESIA A MAJOR REGIONAL POWER OF GREAT IMPOR-
TANCE TO AUSTRALIA. THEY VIEW POLITICAL STABILITY IN
INDONESIA AS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO THEIR SECURITY, AND
THEY BELIEVE THAT UNDER SUHARTO A HIGH DEGREE OF STABILITY
HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. THEY EXPECT SUHARTO TO BE RE-ELECTED
IN 1978. THEY ALSO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE DOES
EXIST SOME UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE LONGER RANGE FUTURE, IN-

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CLUDING THE QUESTION OF SUCCESSION TO SUHARTO. THEY HAVE

ALSO MENTIONED TO US THAT TIMOR CONTINUES TO BE AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL ISSUE IN AUSTRALIA. THEY LOOK ON FRASER'S VISIT TO JAKARTA IN OCTOBER AS A MAJOR OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. FYI. WHILE THE SUBJECT OF AUSTRALIAN-INDONESIAN RELATIONS CAME UP ONLY BRIEFLY DURING THE FRASER VISIT, AT ANZUS AUSTRALIANS INDICATED THAT TIMOR CONTINUED TO BE ONE OF THEIR MAJOR PREOCCUPATIONS. THEY REALIZED THE GOA OPPOSITION TO THE INDONESIAN USE OF FORCE IN TIMOR HAD CAUSED UNHAPPINESS IN JAKARTA, BUT THIS WAS THE THIRD OCCASION SINCE INDEPENDENCE THAT INDONESIANS HAD RESORTED TO FORCE OF ARMS. PRIMARY GOA CONCERN WAS PAPUA-NEW GUINEA. WHILE THERE WAS NO SIGN OF PROBLEMS WITH INDONESIA OVER PNG AT PRESENT, THEY SPECULATED THAT INSTABILITY AT SOME FUTURE TIME MIGHT ENCOURAGE INDONESIAN INTERVENTION. END FYI.

4. IN RESPONSE WE STRESSED TO AUSTRALIANS -- AND AUSTRALIANS AGREED ON -- THE IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE AND FRIENDLY TIES BETWEEN JAKARTA AND CANBERRA. INDONESIA WAS IMPORTANT TO THE US AND WE WERE WORKING TO IMPROVE OUR OWN BILATERAL TIES. THERE WAS, IN OUR VIEW, BOUND TO BE SOME FRICTION PARTICULARLY IN THE ARENA OF NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES. ON BALANCE WE BELIEVED INDONESIA, FACING SEVERE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER ITS SECURITY (AND SERIOUS MILITARY UNPREPAREDNESS) IN THE POST-VIETNAM ENVIRONMENT, DESERVED OUR SUPPORT.

5. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN APPROACHED BY INDONESIAN EMBASSY HERE REQUESTING INFORMATION ON FRASER VISIT TO WASHINGTON. IN RESPONSE WE HAVE PROVIDED THE SUBSTANCE OF PARAS 2 AND 4 ABOVE. KISSINGER

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